

# CONVERSATION CAFÉ: STATE ASSOCIATIONS

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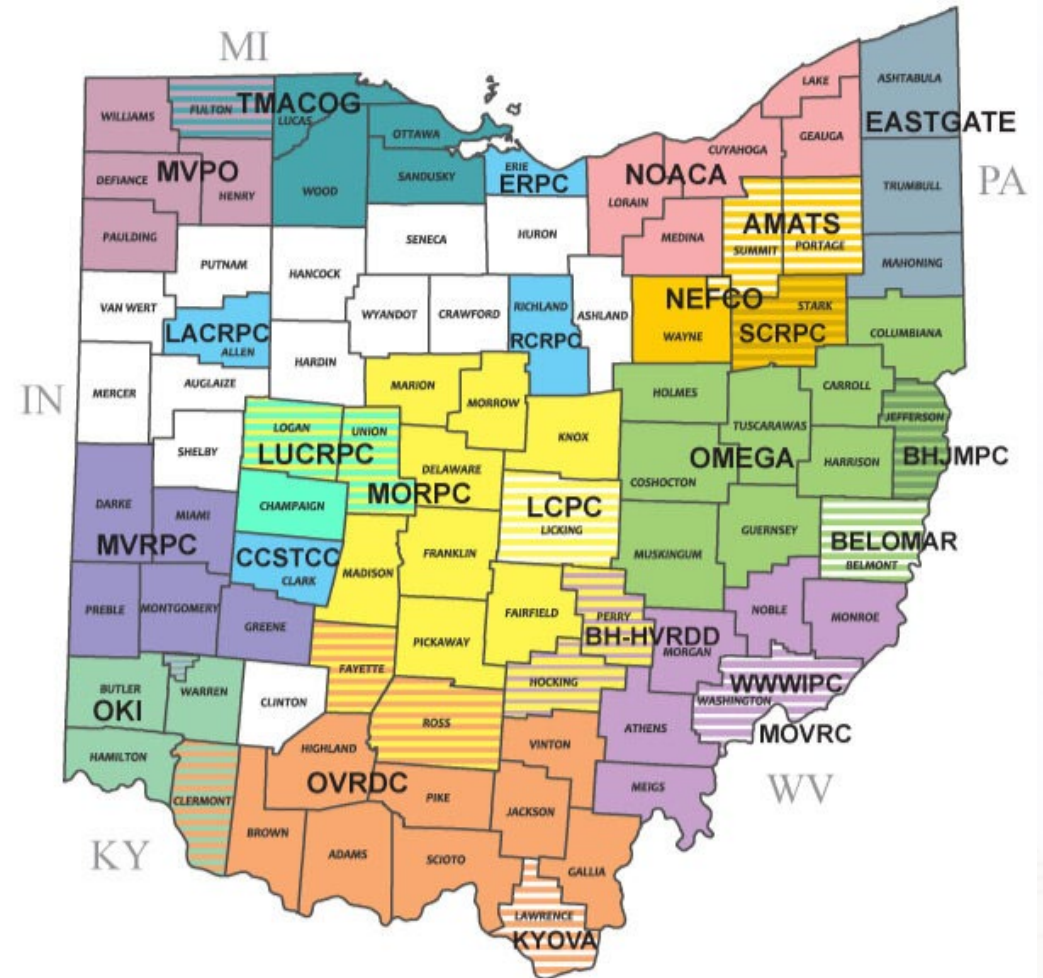
[www.regionalcouncils.org](http://www.regionalcouncils.org)

November 8, 2023



# ABOUT US

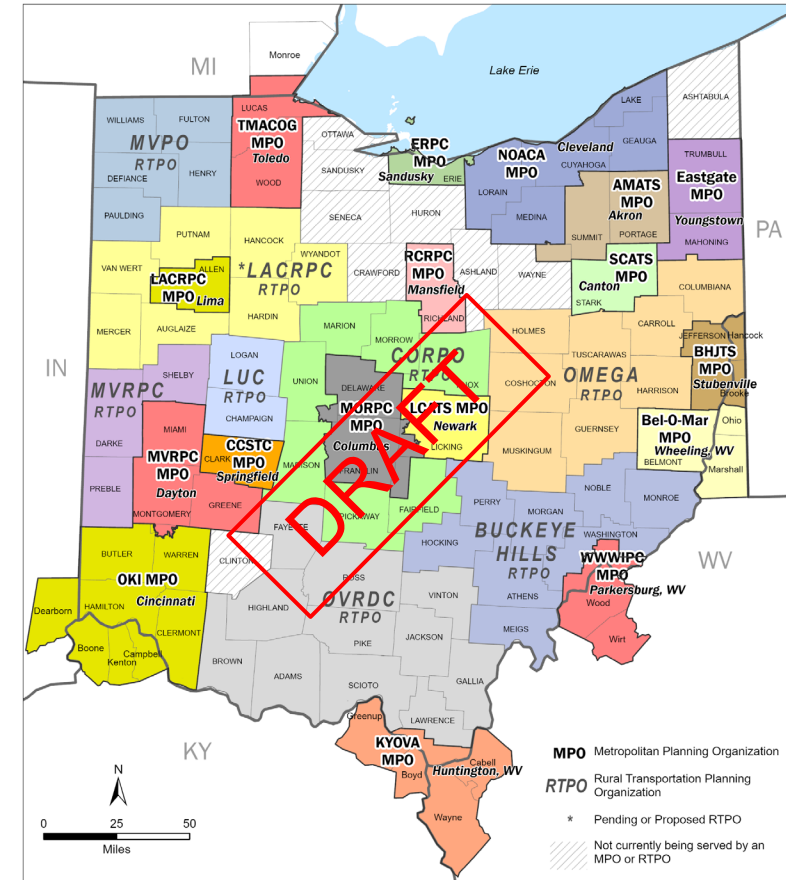
- *“We coordinate voices at a state and federal level, strengthen the role and authority of regional councils, and collaborate, coordinate and solve problems in the areas of transportation, environment and land use planning within the framework of state policy.”*
- *“We work to streamline statewide services at the regional level, leverage federal resources, and serve as stewards of Ohio’s limited resources.”*
- OARC includes 24 agencies
- Serve more than 1,500 municipalities, villages, townships, and counties
- Represent over 10 million residents





VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE

- Not just for MPOs/transportation planning...
- 6 members are Areawide Water Quality Management Planning Agencies
  - Designated under the Clean Water Act and certified by the Governor
- MPOs, RTPOs, Areawides, Planning Commissions, Regional Councils, COGs
- Bi-State and Tri-State agencies

Ohio's MPO/RTPO Transportation Districts  
Draft for Discussion

The information shown on this map is compiled from various sources made available to us which we believe to be reliable.  
N:\ArcGIS\General\OARcv2.aprx 8/14/2023

Purpose of this map is to assist OARC's goal to ensure all of Ohio is being served. Not intended as an OARC membership map.

# STRENGTHS

*In academics, it is called plagiarism. In business, it is called best practices.*



- Meet bimonthly (always in person before Covid)
- Mix of urban and rural organizations
  - Leadership from both types
  - 3 C's (and D)
- OARC Members also active in National Associations
  - AMPO, NARC, NADO Conferences in Ohio over last 2 years
  - OARC supports through sponsorship and attendance



# GUEST SPEAKERS

- Dr. Jack Marchbanks, Ohio Department of Transportation Director
  - Also in attendance: Sara Downs, Chief Financial Officer; Tim McDonald, Deputy Director of Planning; Laurie Leffler, FHWA Ohio Division Administrator
- Dorinda Byers, Deputy Director of Operations, Ohio Auditor of State
- Anne Vogel, Director, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
- Peter Voderberg, Chief of Broadband Ohio
- Greg Vergamini, ODOT Deputy Director of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs
- Mr. Brendan Kelley, Director of Drive Electric Ohio, Clean Fuels Ohio
- Ms. Hallie Neuhaus, Policy & Government Affairs Manager, Clean Fuels Ohio
- Jerry Rouch, Chief, Division of Environmental & Financial Assistance, Ohio EPA
- Nichole Lawhorn, Jeff Payton, and Andrea Stevenson, ODOT Office of Local Programs, Township Stimulus Program
- Derrick James, Midwest Director of Government Affairs, Amtrak



# COMMITTEES – STAFF INVOLVEMENT



- Areawide Water Quality Committee (Chair: OKI)
- Communications Committee (Chair: Buckeye Hills)
- Finance Committee (Chair: MORPC)
- \*Policy Committee (Chair: OVRDC)
- Transportation Committee (Chair: OVRDC)
  - Working Groups
    - ❖ Statewide Safety – MVRPC
    - ❖ Statewide Transportation Innovation Council – MORPC
    - ❖ Freight – OMEGA
    - ❖ Transit – OMEGA / MVRPC
    - ❖ Rideshare/Air Quality – NOACA



# OARC PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

“Plans are worthless, but planning is everything.”  
-- President Dwight D. Eisenhower

## OARC Public Policy Agenda 2023-2024

*The Ohio Association of Regional Councils comprises 24 agencies serving more than 1,500 municipalities, villages, townships and counties in both rural and urban areas across the state. Ohio's regional councils represent over 10 million residents in Ohio.*

*We coordinate local and regional voices at the state and federal levels, endeavor to strengthen the role and authority of regional councils, and collaborate, coordinate and solve problems in the areas of transportation, environment, broadband and land use planning within the framework of federal and state policy.*

<https://www.regionalcouncils.org>

The 2023-2024 OARC Public Policy Agenda lays out the interregional priorities of the 24 agencies that serve more than 10.5 million people across the state. As a statewide association, we advocate for regional approaches and solutions in order to create a larger voice for urban and rural areas before state and federal policymakers.

### Transportation

- Advocate for and fund a regional, multi-modal, fully integrated, and technically advanced transportation system in Ohio that promotes connectivity, accessibility and sustainable transportation options.
  - Support a robust evaluation of passenger rail – including improving existing service, creating new routes and rail implementation – recognizing the need to reduce emissions and incorporate an “all of the above” strategy in addressing Ohio’s diverse mobility needs.
  - Seek additional revenue for multi-modal transportation options at the local, state, and federal levels, and in particular, fund public transit at a level commensurate with the benefit it provides to the entire transportation system – consistent with the findings and recommendations of ODOT’s 2015 Transit Needs Study.
  - Promote incorporation of a broad spectrum of fully integrated, technically advanced transportation options, including driverless and driver assist technology.
  - Support the development and implementation of transportation alternatives that use cleaner fuels to improve air quality and meet federal Clean Air Act standards.
  - Strengthen energy distribution infrastructure to accommodate a coordinated, comprehensive network of conveniently located electric vehicle charging stations.
- Promote efforts, such as DriveOhio, that use data and smart transportation system technologies to improve the operation and efficiency of the transportation network.
- Continue to support the efforts of the Governor and the ODOT Alternative Revenue External Advisory Committee’s objective to secure sufficient long-term funding for Ohio’s transportation infrastructure and laws that encourage safe driving habits.

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- Advocate for legislation and policies that enhance transportation safety for all users, including advancing complete streets and vision zero efforts and supporting adoption of enhanced penalties for distracted driving.
- Support implementation of the Access Ohio 2045 Statewide Transportation Plan to guide policies and investment in strategies into the future.

### Environment and Sustainability

- Support comprehensive water quality planning performed at the regional level backed by sufficient state funding to cover costs, especially through the continued partnership between the Areawide Planning Agencies and the Ohio EPA.
- Promote data accessibility to regional planning organizations and researchers to provide a comprehensive view of pollutant sources and guide efforts to reduce and mitigate their impacts. (Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) farmland data is not easily accessible public information.)
- Encourage legislative remedies to make construction site enforcement authority uniform between counties and municipalities. This would enhance the local governments’ ability to mitigate construction environmental impacts fairly and uniformly.
- Advocate for the restoration and protection of Ohio’s water resources through coordinated efforts and increased funding and regulation at the local, state and federal level.
  - Support H2Ohio, Clean Ohio Fund, the Ohio Lake Erie Commission and other initiatives to address water quality issues throughout Ohio.
  - Promote a balance of responsibilities, objectives, and goals among the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and the Ohio EPA with respect to the oversight of agricultural sources of water quality impairment.
  - Return Clean Water Act permitting and regulatory authority of concentrated animal feeding operations to the Ohio EPA.
- Support adequate funding levels for local health districts to facilitate implementation of Ohio’s sewage rules in order to ensure proper functioning of onsite sewage treatment systems.
- Support air quality legislation and public policy that is innovative, reduces emissions, protects public health, and leads to a strong economy.
- Support efforts that provide resources to preserve and enhance green space and farmland, and improve outdoor recreation and trail development.
- Support continued robust state financial resources for brownfield remediation, historic preservation and redevelopment, which will revitalize communities with job growth and environmental cleanup.
- Promote land use best practices and planning tools that preserve and restore sensitive natural areas, reduce energy consumption, and encourage sustainable development and strategic reinvestment.

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### Economic Development

- Support balanced regional economic development strategies at the state and federal levels that attract new quality jobs and investments to all regions, especially Environmental Justice (EJ) areas and those with historic disinvestment.
- Support continued development of Ohio’s ports, including intermodal facilities; rail; inland ports; road and highway freight corridor investments, especially those with international importance; and other freight enhancing policy.
- Advocate for expanded broadband access, digital equity, reliability and affordability in both rural and urban communities as well as a defined role for regional councils in the process.
- Advocate for policies and funding to support workforce development and improve access to jobs, workforce training, and resources that enhance the financial stability of the state’s low- and moderate-income households.
- Support the continued efforts of the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Ohio Governor’s Office of Appalachia to fund applicable economic development activities and projects.
- Support the formation of multi-state collaborative entities, such as the proposed Great Lakes Authority, as needed to boost regional cooperation on long-term economic development, workforce creation, innovation and environmental conservation in key economic regions of Ohio.

### Regionalism

- Promote state designation and recognition of regional approaches to transportation planning and investments, sanitary sewer and water system management, protection of watersheds, provision of government services and other new investments and programs in state law and regulations.
- Urge Ohio’s legislature to grant permanent permissive authority for governments in Ohio to have the option of utilizing public access teleconference meetings to conduct business.
- Educate local, state and federal public officials on the benefits of regionalism.
- Support the restoration of funding for programs, such as the Local Government Fund and Local Government Innovation and Efficiency Funds, which provide resources to foster greater collaboration and efficiencies among local communities.
- Support policies that allow for cross-jurisdictional equipment purchases, and provision of public services that encourages frugal use of taxpayer dollars.
- Distribute federal and state revenue in an equitable manner using formulas that better ensure that dollars go back to, or are expended in, the communities and regions where they were collected.

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# CREDIBILITY AND VISIBILITY IN COLUMBUS

- Government Advantage Group for Consultant/Legislative Services
  - Represent similar associations; bring opportunities
  - Fix Our Roads (FOR) Ohio
- Advocate for legislation
  - Remote Meeting Authority\*
  - HB 62 Transportation Bill
  - Allow councils of governments the statutory authority to use county prosecutors as legal counsel
  - Distracted Driving Initiative
  - Residential Broadband Expansion Grant Program
- Participation on statewide committees
  - Grace Gallucci, NOACA, on External Advisory Committee for ODOT's Alternative Revenue Mechanisms Study





# GUBERNATORIAL FORUM

# 2022

## OARC CANDIDATES FORUM

Friday, August 26, 2022 | 9:00 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.  
401 North High Street | Columbus, OH 43215



## AGENDA

- 8:30 a.m.** Registration and Networking with Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m.** Morning Opening Remarks  
*Governor Mike DeWine provides remarks with moderated discussion*
- 10:15 a.m.** Break
- 10:30 a.m.** Panel Discussion  
*Planning for a More Prosperous Ohio*
- 11:15 a.m.** Networking
- 11:30 a.m.** Lunch & Keynote Discussion  
*Ohio's future: Policy Insights on Economic Development & Infrastructure*
- 12:45 p.m.** Break
- 1:00 p.m.** Afternoon Opening Remarks  
*Former Mayor Nan Whaley provides remarks with moderated discussion*
- 2:15 p.m.** Program Closes

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# CONFERENCE ON FREIGHT

- Alternate between Columbus, Cincinnati, and Cleveland
- OARC helps as sponsor
- 2023 in Cincinnati, 2024 in Cleveland
- 2023 Keynotes from Ohio Department of Transportation  
Director Dr. Jack Marchbanks and  
Kentucky Transportation Cabinet  
Secretary Jim Gray



## OKI Conference on Freight



**Thanks to our  
partners for  
making this  
event possible.**

<https://ohioconferenceonfreight.com/>



# THANK YOU!

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